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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1913.

WHAT THE FEE SYSTEM COSTS THE PEOPLE.

Ten thousand five hundred and ninety-one dollars was the net saving to the people of Richmond in the last two years because the fee system as it related to our city collectibility was abolished and a fixed salary substituted as compensation for the holder of that office. City taxes last year aggregated \$2,215,670 and the cost of collecting that amount was \$8,320.01, or three-eighths of 1 per cent. Of the latter sum, \$3,600 went for the salary of the City Collector and \$4,720 was used for the expenses incident to the office. Under the fee system, five-eighths of 1 per cent was allowed the City Collector. At that rate the cost to the city of collecting its taxes for 1912 would have been \$13,428 under the fee system. From these figures it is clear, therefore, that Richmond saves more than \$5,000 annually because its City Collector is paid a fixed compensation instead of fees.

The office of City Collector is a fifth wheel in so far as the collection of taxes is concerned. There is no reason why the duties of the office should not be added to those of the City Treasurer. The Norfolk Virginian-Pilot terms this office "a useless sinecure, entailing upon the taxpayers an expenditure for which they receive nothing that even approaches compensative benefit." Yet the position cannot be abolished because of a statute making its maintenance mandatory upon every city in the State of more than 30,000 population, declares the Norfolk newspaper. That statute, which we have been unable to run down, "was enacted at the instance of the local political leaders for the special purpose of rendering null and void the provisions of Norfolk's new charter whereby the city collectibility was done away with and the duties of the office merged with those of the city treasurer."

Richmond's course in reducing in part the unnecessary expenditure entailed by the existence of the office causes the Virginian-Pilot to say: "There is absolutely no reason why a similar reform should not be effected here and with equally satisfactory results; there is every reason why advantage should be taken of the opportunity presented by the approaching expiration of the city collector's present term to inaugurate such reform." Figures secured from the city controller's office in Norfolk show that the fees received by the city collector of Norfolk for collecting the municipal taxes last year amounted to \$12,250.70. The office, the Virginian-Pilot is informed, employs two clerks regularly and two extra clerks during the busy season each year. Adopting the Virginian-Pilot's estimate of the outlay for clerical hire at \$4,000, which certainly seems to be a "very liberal estimate," it is found that the city collector would draw a net annual salary of more than \$8,000. "And for what?" inquires the Norfolk critic. "For discharging duties which any ordinary clerk could perform just as well and just as efficiently."

To establish the office on a fixed salary basis—of \$5,000, say—would save the Norfolk taxpayers at least \$5,000 annually, "without interfering with the efficiency of the public service and without entailing an iota of injustice upon any one." Moreover, "if Richmond can secure for \$3,600 a year, and she does, a competent and efficient man to collect municipal taxes aggregating more than \$2,000,000, certainly Norfolk ought to have no difficulty in obtaining for \$3,600 a year a man no less competent and efficient to collect taxes totaling less than a million and a half dollars." In Norfolk, there are hundreds of suitable men who would be glad to take the city collectibility at such a salary. No special ability is needed for the office; capacity for ordinary clerical duties is all that is required.

It is hoped that the City Council of Norfolk will initiate the wise public economy exercised by Richmond in shifting the city collectibility from a fee to a salary basis. An annual saving of \$5,000 yearly is not to be scoffed at; in a short time the economy would be greater than that, because the amount of taxes collected increases from year to year. Moreover, if Norfolk should effect this economy, its example, coupled with that of Richmond, would constitute a powerful practical argument for the abolition of the fee system wherever it exists in Virginia. If Richmond and Norfolk can each save \$5,000 annually by the installation of the salary system in a single office, who can estimate how much more they would save if their city court clerks and city sergeants and other fee officers were put on a salary basis? Extend the salary principle to all fee offices in the State, and enormous saving will be effected. Why should the people pay city collectors and other fee officers more than State Supreme Court judges, the Governor and other high State officers receive? The fee system violates all right and all reason; it is unbusinesslike and wasteful. Its doom is sealed.

SELF-SUPPORTING PARKS.

The problem of providing Richmond, young and old, with clean, moral recreation out of doors is large-

ly a matter of money. It is argued that we cannot afford the expense of large parks and playgrounds because the city is too poor. That this difficulty may be overcome in a very practical manner is shown by the experience of Hartford, Conn., as reported in the Municipal Journal. Before the American Civic Association, the superintendent of parks in that city expressed the deliberate opinion that city parks could be made self-supporting without in any way curtailing the free use of them by citizens, and, in fact, the plan increased their usefulness. His conclusion is drawn from experiments in Hartford parks the last four years.

His first step was to open a refectory in one of the parks. He intended to make no profit for the city, so improved the quality and increased the quantity of refreshments furnished the public, added to the wages of the waiters and employed a manager. In his own words, "he did everything necessary to eliminate all possible profit." Yet at the end of a year there was a net earning of \$1,200. He next provided a place for skaters to rest in, check garments and secure coffee, sausages, chocolate and the like. The prices ranged from 1 cent to 5. At the end of the skating season he found that the service had paid for itself, and for heat, light, rinks and part of keeping the lake clear of snow.

Next, he is trying to make a large park self-supporting by building a building 350 feet long, which will accommodate a dance hall, bowling alley, moving pictures, refectory and auditorium. The park board recommended an appropriation of \$40,000 for this purpose, but the Council had available only \$10,000, which has been devoted to grading and preparing for the recreation hall. Even should this venture not be self-maintaining, the good results of clean and well-regulated amusement at cheap prices for the ordinary citizen will be a handsome dividend on the money spent.

His expenditures are based on some interesting data. He figures that in his city of 100,000, each citizen can be said to spend one hour a day in the municipal recreation grounds. The average recreation hour in a city costs between 1 and 2 cents. So he concludes that he can count on \$2,000. Of this, 20 per cent is profit, or \$400. This exceeds the daily cost of maintaining the entire Hartford park system. The city can furnish this recreation at less cost than private corporations, and it also provides for the most difficult class—youthful people between sixteen and twenty-one.

It would be well for Richmond to study such examples of enlightened recreation methods founded on solid business principle.

THOMAS NELSON PAGE ON WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.

In the course of a recent newspaper interview some very sane and pertinent comments upon the woman's suffrage movement were made by Thomas Nelson Page. This distinguished Virginia writer feels that if the right to vote were granted to women without any other qualification, very few of the women of the South would be favorable to the propaganda. He also thinks that the demand for votes for women in this country is not extensive and "is the result of a laborious effort to churn up interest on the part of a by no means large fraction of the female population." The absence of any great moral purpose in the agitation is also noted by Mr. Page, and he deprecates the fact that the suffragettes have not contemplated any plans beyond securing the franchise privilege. Fundamentally, he is of the opinion that the woman's suffrage movement has received a considerable impetus from those who wish to raise the economic status of women, but who, by reason of loose thinking, confuse the so-called woman movement with the demand for votes for women.

"I would divide this question," Mr. Page states, "clearly from that which is contained in the general phrase, the woman question or the woman movement." I think, as to this, that the movement on behalf of women, of late years, has been of inestimable benefit to all the lower classes of women, and in a lesser degree has been a benefit on the whole to the upper classes of women. First, it has opened up for those who needed it, in whatever class, new professions, trades and means of livelihood, which have given hundreds of thousands of them the ability to support themselves in directions previously closed to them. Secondly, it has caused a great element among them to think seriously on subjects which were of vital importance not only to women, but to the community at large, and has opened up new avenues of usefulness formerly barred against them. So much for the woman question.

"Now, when it comes to the other question, female suffrage, although I do not think it a subject which can be decided without difficulty and tossed aside in a few sentences, I find, when I look deep into my heart, that I am opposed to it—certainly to the extent to which claim is now laid to it." There is certainly strong ground for Mr. Page's position. Undoubtedly, a large number of persons who are deeply concerned with the industrial condition of women at the present time have, without careful consideration and in an excess of sympathy, decided that the suffrage is the best means for obtaining redress from economic injustices. There is no reason to believe, however, that the granting to women of the right to vote would be an effective means of accomplishing these laudable purposes.

THIRD WOODROW'S SWEET RESTORER, BALMY SLEEP!

It is good for Mr. Woodrow Wilson to talk all he wants about sleep now, ere the days of March render the gentle thing. He will never again get the ten hours he requires until the night of the next President's inauguration day. This is sad, since probably more than ever will he need this quota to keep both health and temper. Already he must have missed some of the precious decade of hours, if his lapse into perfunctory epithet about not telling his Cabinet selections is an indication. By the time the real cohorts get busy around his throne he will discover a desire to sleep twenty-six hours, and the chance to sleep a paltry six.

To assuage his mournful anticipa-

tions we give the opinion of the coroner of Cincinnati: "Seven hours' sleep is all that is necessary for any human being, and if obtained regularly in certain hours nightly, will keep the body and mind in a healthy state. A person who sleeps over seven hours has had too much rest, which makes the mind sluggish and the muscles lazy. Men and women who commit crime, as a rule, are long sleepers. Their minds grow weak from too much sleep, and then they acquire the 'don't care' habit, which often results in crime. Much of the disease of to-day is due to too much sleep or too little sleep."

The stupendous conclusion in the last sentence is probably either true or not true, maybe both. But we think the coroner is hasty in assuming that seven hours is the exact standard by which to judge of the too muchness or too littleness. If we must deal in platitudes, let us say that "one man's meat is another man's poison." Seven hours is too much for a man who needs five or too little for Mr. Wilson, who wants ten.

A better criterion would be what a man does while awake. It is very likely not the sleep that makes the criminal, but the laziness and slothfulness of the weak soul that makes for indolent slumbering. Considering the amount of literary and academic work Mr. Wilson has gotten through with in his fourteen hours of wakefulness each day, we hardly think he is degenerating. As a rule, we believe the hard abstract thinker uses up more vital tissue than the active man, and needs longer rest periods to restore it. Napoleon and Edison have been satisfied with four or five hours, but the late Dr. Noah Davis, of the University of Virginia, a philosopher of distinction, never arose until afternoon. He then held his classes and consumed part of the night in reading and contemplation.

Sleeping, like diet and exercise, is an individual idiosyncrasy. The wise person can find out about the time he needs for repose and then forget the rules. Besides, if a few extra hours are spent sleeping, what better use could be made of them? Such divine forgetfulness for many is the best part of life.

PATHEMIC MEXICO.

The news of a temporarily successful invasion of the Mexican capital by the revolutionists under Felix Diaz, the nephew of the Dictator-President is surprising only in its suddenness. That Madero's government held sway through a slight, momentary balance of power has been amply demonstrated by his failure to subdue the rebels in the provinces. It has not been suspected, however, that his hold upon the city itself and the army was so feeble.

The immediate situation in Mexico is not clear from the reports of the revolt, ending in the barricading of Madero and his personal following in the National Palace. Mexican revolutionaries are too kaleidoscopic to be used as the basis for actual estimate of the internal conditions. It is not unlikely that Madero may still control enough of the army to relieve his present embarrassment. But so far as this new turn of affairs affects the United States, it dictates no change of policy. American citizens will be protected, and the precarious situation of the present government in no wise alters our attitude of noninterference.

Americans, however, cannot but feel profound sympathy for the apparently desperate uncertainty of life and property in the sister republic. The exploitation of the people by leaders who use a national discontent to further their own ambitions is apparently producing no permanent constructive betterment. There will come no end to this swaying of selfish control back and forth until the people are unified by some sentiment of national ambition that will produce patriotic leaders great enough and unselfish enough to subordinate their own petty designs to the larger good of the entire state.

CUT OFF THE RED TAPE.

Sherman L. Whipple, a leader at the Boston bar, in an address delivered at the recent meeting of the Florida Bar Association, went directly to the root of the difficulties which now surround litigation in this country. Our present involved and technical court procedure was the object of his assault. Mr. Whipple would remedy the present avoidance of legal responsibility through technicalities by abolishing the ancient rules which congest dockets and bar swift and sure justice. It is his proposal to have the evidence presented in a frank and open method, in which technicalities would not be regarded. He believes that this would result in less litigation in court, for the reason that most cases would be adjusted by the attorneys of the contending parties. His solution is radical, yet simple. It at least deserves trying out. Pleading and practice have resolved themselves into an involved science, difficult of mastery and often unfriendly to right.

"A New York Methodist preacher has broken all records for pancake eating. This adds another blue ribbon to their winnings, since they have long since held the record on fried chicken." So far the Blackstone Courier is right, but it ought to add that in the Nottoway capital they have established a world's record on the invincible Blackstone waffle.

It's nearly time to pick the team you want to win the baseball championship this year.

The farmers did not indorse votes for women, but what will the farmers' wives say?

Why is there no Woodrow Wilson Street in Richmond?

After this failure, the Ground Hog will never be able to come back.

Some near-sighted merchants are in favor of calling it the Partial Post.

On the Spur of the Moment
By Roy K. Moulton

Caught on the Fly.
Castro says he doesn't think much of America, anyhow. Well, the feeling seems to be entirely mutual. Obadiah Gardner may be the next Secretary of Agriculture. Obadiah certainly mitch the part.

A Kansas farmer lost a \$600 diamond in his yard. Being a Kansas farmer, he should search his whiskers first. Mr. Taft will get \$5,000 a year as a Yale professor. The football coach gets \$10,000.

Mr. Rockefeller says: "Save your pennies. Yes, save them for Mr. Rockefeller."

There are nineteen grades of eggs on the market. About fifteen of them are from "Strictly Fresh" down to "Fresh."

It is said Mr. Wilson will listen to Bryan. He is one of the few who can do that without buying lecture tickets.

The total gold production in the United States during 1912 was \$91,655,107.75 cents will probably be divided equally among the ultimate consumers.

Things You Cannot Send.
The new parcel post will be a great boon to the downtrodden Gen. Public, but it should be remembered that inasmuch as there is a limit to the postman's carrying capacity, there are some things that cannot be sent. Among them may be mentioned:
Steam rollers.
Stone bridges.
Water works standpipes.
Tombstones.
Cast iron dogs for front yard.
Horseless plows.
Kitchen stoves.
Refrigerators.
Melodeons.
Collapsible garages.
Ice wagons.
Steam piledrivers.
Coffins.
Carnegie libraries.
Derivatives.
Zodiacs.
Alligators.
Sewing machines.

From the Hickoryville Clarion.

The lightning express on our railroad ran into a lumberjack last Thursday and was derailed nobody being hurt. Ren Blinks, who was running the handcar, didn't know about the accident until he read about it in the paper. The train was twenty-four hours late, so it got into our place right on time.

At the musicale at the opy house next Tuesday evening Miss Amarielle Teeter is on the program to sing "All Through the Night." Uncle Ezra Harkins says he'll be turned off by it is a feller has got to have a little sleep.

Lem Higgins had a grouch on yesterday, and just to relieve himself of it he sent a comic pitcher postcard to the Sultan of Turkey.

When Hanks Tumms goes home late to supper he takes Hol Peters with him. His wife is too polite to hit him with a rolling pin before company comes. There was to be an Uncle Tom show in Tibbitts's opy house one night last week, but Little Eva stayed on the train and clonped with the baggage man. He is fifteen years younger than she is, but otherwise is looked upon as a good match.

I never ain't the snap it used to be before the common people began keepin' help and eatin' dinner at night.

Go in there are three women going across the road in front of an out-moble, one will go on across, another will go back, and the third will stand still.

Hank Tumms, of our village, has got the appointment of deputy sheriff, and if he performs the duty of his office impartially he will have to arrest about three times a day.

Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Harkins have sold their bed room furniture to buy gasoline.

Voice of the People

Landholders and the Labor Question.

Editor The Times-Dispatch:
Sir,—A recent article in an agricultural paper on the question of labor on the farms attracted my attention and I felt that a few words on this subject may be of interest to some of your readers. A trip across this State, especially the northern portions, will easily convince the most casual observer that the country population is being rapidly depleted and the census figures for 1910 will confirm that fact when it is noted that counties like Loudoun, Fauquier, Rappahannock, Clarke, Warren, and many others, have decreased in population in the past twenty years, just at a period when the old State has begun to lift its head from the protracted period of wreck and ruin following the Civil War.

It is a well-known fact that in those and like localities the big landholders have been buying up the smaller ones and moving them away, yet they complain of the paucity of men leaving the country places, when it is a well-known fact that those who would like to remain on the land have no sort of prospects held out to them except that of being always a tenant on the big farm without hope of a home of their own.

Some twenty years ago I knew of a young man who took charge of his mother's farm in the upper part of this State to attempt to run it. There were on it some seven families of worthless negro tenants and laborers and none others. This young man dismissed all the negroes, secured only one white family to move on the place, but had adjoining the farm three white neighbors, who had small places, not large enough to give them work for a living.

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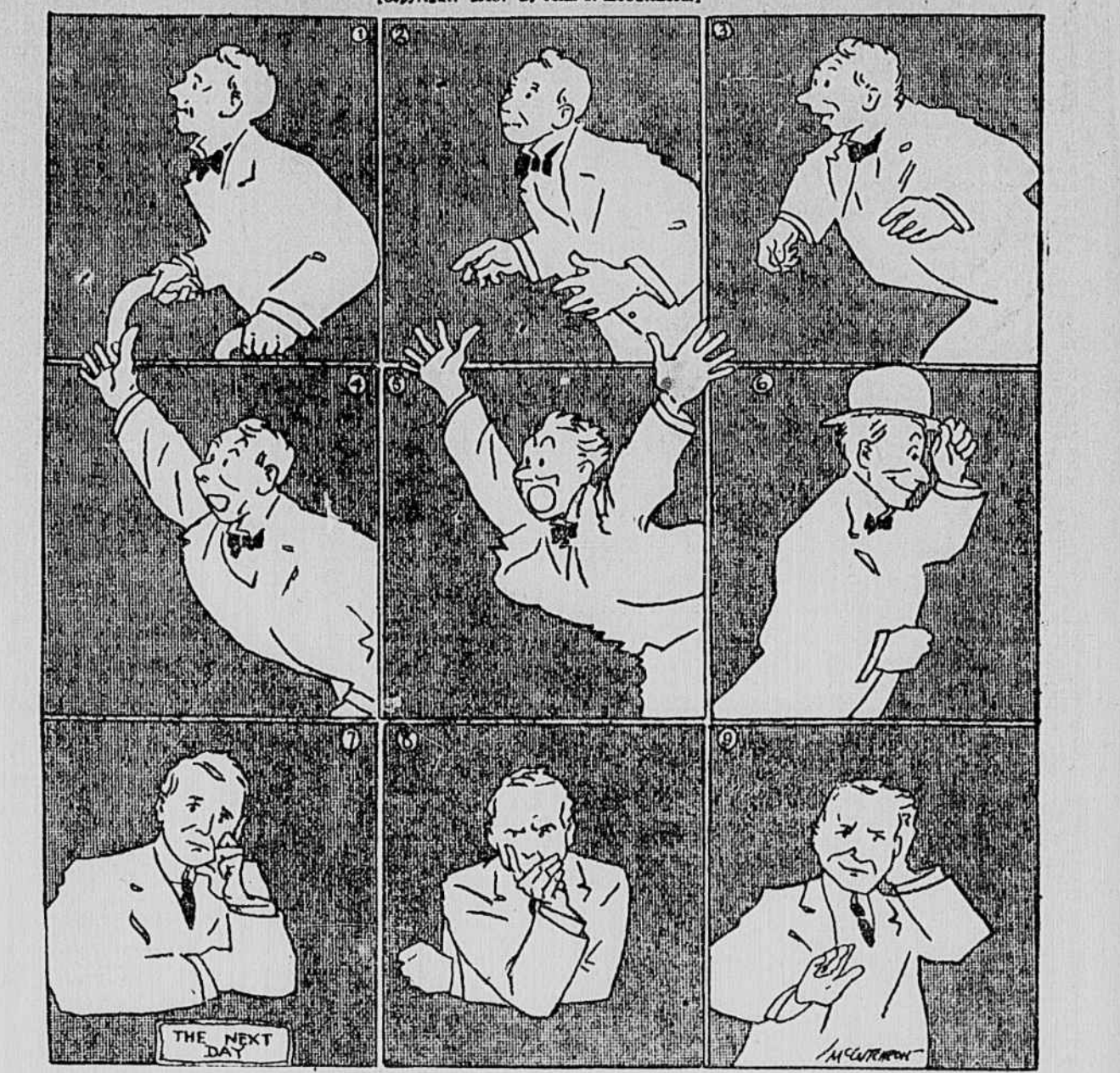
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UNDER THE SPELL OF ORATORY—THE DAY AFTER.
By John T. McCutcheon.

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THE NEXT DAY

their force. To these he rented portions of the farm, under his supervision, and all told it was a highly successful experiment, and no more negroes fed from that farm after that. I have noticed in this trucking section a number of people who live in the various villages and run small portions of farms nearby. This has convinced me that the small landholder in either section is glad to get good land to work near at hand, and some of them prefer this to actually owning a full-size farm. Many landowners in the State could quickly solve the labor question by simply cutting off a section of land and selling it in small quantities to a good class of white owners in order to fix them on the land, by providing their own homes and at the same time a labor surplus would be created. Which is what the farmer needs. If a dozen farmers in any one community were to do this and thus locate good white men they would be astonished at the results. There would be less drift-away from the country by the sturdy white workers. But with the policy of some landholders to fight the white tenant with the negro tenant so as to get the one who will work for the least, there is no promise to the industrious young white man and he is forced to go to the city to look for work.

Thousands of acres of land in South-side Virginia are to-day basking in an undisguised poverty that might be dotted with thrifty homes if such a policy as I have first pointed out had been the rule. Instead of the plan last named. In some sections of the State the negro has already obtained such a footing in the buying up of the lands that it would be possible only in part to invoke the plan I have suggested. Where the negroes buy the land they usually drop out as possible laborers, if they can scrape up a living on their lots. For this reason the farmers have themselves withdrawn from their communities a big portion of the available labor by making the negro landowners and farm managers, himself, and in some sections the whites have been dispossessed of the land to an alarming degree. If the facts in this subject are studied, One-fifth of the lands in Louisa, King and Queen, Middlesex, Charles City and some others, have already been bought up by negroes. It is time the white landholders of this State were taking thought of this proposition in seriousness and save themselves and their communities, and at the same time solve what has been a hard problem. I believe this could do much to remedy this growing evil and great loss to the country sections.

THOS. B. ROBERTSON.
Eastville, Va.

Opposes Bible Reading in the Public Schools.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:
Sir,—The spectacle of a representative of the Hebrew race protesting to members of the Anglo-Saxon race against the use of a library of Hebrew literature in the public schools is interesting, to say the least. It has something of kinship (though not the disgraceful aspect) to the persecution of the Jews by the very people who have appropriated the Hebrew religion—modifying it by appropriations from other sources. It might appear, at first thought, that the Jews would be proud of the honor thus paid the ancient literature. However, for certain reasons, and to them, at least, very good reasons, they do not feel pleased, but feel aggrieved. Dr. Calisch's point is well taken, and I think that no student of Virginia history will doubt that had the same question been presented to Thomas Jefferson, he would have taken a position similar to that of the Rabbi. Dr. Calisch seems well able to take care of himself, therefore needs no words of mine in regard to this phase of the question. There are other reasons, however, which I would urge against the use of the Bible in the public schools. First, many of its teachings are out of harmony with the text-books of the schools. Does any one imagine for a moment that there is a harmony between the Bible and the text-books on astronomy? Between the geology of Moses and the geology taught in the schools? Again, will not the board have to designate some text version of the Bible to be used? Should it fail to do this, will not there be opportunity for the teacher to select that version to which he or she is partial? The newspapers a short time since printed the account of a new "Baptist Bible," in which the terms

rendered "hell" in the older versions were rendered "the grave," etc. Now, will the children of our good Baptist brethren have to hear of the "lake of fire and brimstone" or will the children of other denominations be robbed of that "comforting doctrine" by being read from a "Baptist Bible?"

Again, by designating the Bible as the book from which the teacher shall read, other great ethical and religious literature is excluded. The Bible is placed in a class by itself. It is inferred that it is the revelation of God instead of a revelation of God. If we are to have scriptural reading in the schools, let us not confine it to the Hebrew scriptures, but let us be free to draw upon the other great literatures of the world. Let us not even by inference teach that God has shut himself up to one book or to one people, but let us recognize the fact that if revelation is true at all, it is true for every race and for every age. As a religious teacher, I draw largely upon the Bible for inspiration and instruction. I feel free also to read from the scriptures of India, of China, of other nations, and I find in these ethical scriptures the same marks of revelation as I find in the Bible. The Bible is a noble literature, but it needs to be "saved" from its friends. (Rev.) S. C. WEATHERLY.
Pastor Unitarian Church, Highland Springs.

Miss Carrington's Verses.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:
Sir,—While you are on the subject of poetry, I should like to call your attention to a very modest Southern poet, whose work is far better known in intellectual Boston than it is in money-mad Richmond. I refer to Miss Mary Cole Carrington, of 1420 Grove Avenue, this city, daughter of the late Judge Isaac Carrington, whose poem, "A Valentine," in the current Munsey, is a fair example of her finished art. ADMIRER.

Richmond, February 1.

The Hunger Moon.

Far fields of silence, wide wastes of snow;
Creeping like shadows 'gainst the wolfish wind,
A morsel dropped from the scarred, icy hand
Gripping the land.
Ae, as hunger, like icicles bright-
The sun's rays hold.
No warmth as they slant through the leafless wood
Stillness, save for a seeking, rustling sound
Along the ground.
Whirling wings fold down with the night, to flee
From treachery
Soon when a snapping twig warns of
While to and fro
Wild Hope lings baying 'neath the Hunger Moon.
"Spring soon—spring soon!"
BOYDTON.

Queries & Answers.

Dog Law.
Please state for me the Virginia dog law.
The text is far too long to publish here. Briefly, it provides for the taxation of dogs and the formation of a fund from this money out of which damage done by dogs to stock in the counties may be paid for.

Lynching and Executions.

In which State are there the most lynchings, and in which the most legal executions last year? MARCUS.
Georgia. New York.

Trunks.

Please tell me how many trunks there are in the United States and which one has the largest issue of stock, and which controls the largest number of plants.
"Moody's Manual" gives 294 as the number doing business in 1912. The United States Steel Corporation has the largest issue of common stock, \$508,302,500, and controls the largest number of "plants," 800.

Mount Rogers.

Please tell me where Mount Rogers is and how high it is. I have heard it stated that this mountain is the highest point in Virginia. Is this true? F. J. KING.
Grayson County. 5,710 feet. Yes.

VIEWS OF THE VIRGINIA EDITORS

Good Roads and Good Schools.
These two subjects go naturally together. They stand or fall together. How can a community prosper sufficiently to have good schools if the residents have to drive their teams through mud holes and over rough roads that injure and destroy vehicles and animals?

It is poor economy to spend lots of money in teams and vehicles and then vote down a bond issue because it means a little increase of taxation. It is poor economy, too, for people to put up with poor school buildings and poorly equipped teachers because such are cheap.

Come to think carefully on these matters, are there many folks who would not be willing to have their tax bills increased in order to get good roads and good schools in the neighborhood? Taking even a selfish view of the matter, good roads and good schools mean the financial development of a community, and consequently the enhancement of property values, to say nothing of the other benefits that follow.

The light that is on in Spotsylvania for good roads is being watched with great interest, and that fine old county having made such a good start, it will be a great pity if her people should stop in the good work.

Every thinking person knows that good roads and good schools cost money, and in order to get them people must